

**IN THE CLAIMS**

Amend claims 1, 6 and 11 to read as follows:

*Sub E1*

1. (Three Times Amended) An image processing apparatus, comprising:

*C1*

a processor, wherein the processor places bits for describing information different from information of image data obtained by image processing on original image data only in specific bit positions of multiple bits of pixel data only at predetermined positions of said processed image, each of the pixel data being expressed by using multiple bits.

*C2*

6. (Three Times Amended) An image processing method comprising:

obtaining first processed image data by performing image processing on original image data; and

placing bits for describing information different from information of said first processed image data only in specific bit positions of multiple bits of pixel data only at predetermined positions of said processed image, each of the pixel data being expressed by using multiple bits.

*C3*

11. (Three Times Amended) A recording medium in which a program for a computer is stored, wherein said program is one that enables the computer to perform the following processing:

placing bits for describing information different from information of image data, which is obtained by image processing on original image data, only in specific bit positions of multiple bits of pixel data only at predetermined positions of said processed image, each of the pixel data being expressed by using multiple bits.

Add the following new claim 21:

*C4*

21. An image processing method comprising:

obtaining processed image data by performing image processing on original image data;

and

placing bits for describing information different from information of the processed image data in specific bit positions of pixel data at predetermined pixels of said processed image, each of the predetermined pixels of said processed image being separated by at least one pixel from the rest of the predetermined pixels.